

particular', they were not being hypocrites. Conscious charlatanism would have disguised itself more cunningly; this is the nakedness of innocence. The City of London wanted cash, rather than credit for virtue; and at once genuinely persuaded itself, as so often before and since 'in our rough island-story', that the path of profit was tie path of duty. This is, no doubt, intellectually more contemptible than cool fraud; but it is less likely to lead to an unamiable cynicism (except, indeed, in its victims). So today our laws about divorce and public morality are framed and administered in a way that might shake the sides of an intelligent Polynesian. Yet they survive all the industry of reformers, not so much because the English are, or wish to seem, more virtuous than the French as, I believe, because the English mind in its blind, intuitive way feels that love affairs interfere terribly with business. It is better to play golf Long ago, Montesquieu noted that the English preferred, rather than ^{une} ^{d6bauche} qui leur laisserait toute leur libert6 et leur loisir', So Cato praised the young Roman he met emerging from a house of ill-fame (characteristic English circumlocution); in England, even in the eighteenth century, the young man would have been more careful not to be seen, and Cato, unconsciously, more careful not to see him; but the principle was the same. Hence that perpetual

source of rage to the English intelligentsia,
who have
to live as foreigners and exiles in their own
country—our
official tolerance of any amount of frivolous
incompetency
in a musical comedy, while any serious
dramatic treatment
of a subject like incest is relentlessly
banned. Yet
there is, again, a certain method even in this
madness: it
is not conventional joking, but
unconventional thinking,
that endangers conventional morality.
Tennyson and
Browning both liked smoking-room stories;
there exist